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SOURCE Newspapers as indicated.

STABILIZE SHIFTING SAND DUNES IN USSR

[Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources]

Work on sand-dune control is being undertaken in many regions of the USSR. The most effective control of shifting sand dunes is accomplished by providing the dunes with a vegetative cover.

The Council of Ministers Latvian SSR has approved an afforestation plan to be put into effect between 1950-1955 for the control of thousands of hectares of sand dunes, heather areas, and treeless land of the Latvian SSR. The new forests will contain mostly pines, older trees, and birch trees. Enterprises of the Ministry of Forestry are collecting seeds of various species of deciduous and evergreen trees grown in Latvia. Several tree nurseries will be opened in 1950 and over 100 hectares of land will be utilized each year for this purpose.(1) The seeds will be used to plant trees on an area of 67,000 hectares. The tree planting on the seashore will have great significance for the agriculture of the republic.(2)

According to Turkmenskaya Iskra, much work is also being done in Turkmen SSR to control shifting sand dunes. Saxaul is already growing along the railroad bed between Nebit-Dag and Krasnovodsk. Similar plantings to protect the railroad line from sand drifts have been made in many other regions. The total area on which saxaul and tamarisk have been planted is 240 hectares.

As a result of many years of investigation, Turkmen scholars have found a successful means of planting trees on takirs (wide desert areas without vegetation). Plans have now been drawn up to plant trees on the Kizil-Atrek Plain and on the Kazandzhik takir (mud flat).(3)

A Forest Conservation Station has also been set up in Tsyurupinsk to afforest the sands of the Lower Dnepr area. The station has at its disposal powerful tractors, canal diggers, excavators, special plows, tree planters, and other machines. The workers of the station exceeded the 1949 spring plan for tree planting by 50 percent. Preparations for fall work have been completed.

SECRET

- 1 -

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White acacias, maple vines, and other trees are to be planted this fall on a 1,500-hectare area in Tsyurupinskiy, Golopristsanskiy, Novo-Mayachkovskiy, and Skadovskiy rayons. (4)

The problem of shifting sand dunes has also been under study by field expeditions. For example, an expedition of the Central Asiatic Scientific Research Institute of Forestry and the Ministry of Forestry Uzbek SSR has investigated the region of Kzyl-Kum bordering on the Khorezm Oasis. Members of the expedition noted that the first measures for the fixation of the shifting sands had been undertaken. The sowing and planting of sand-fixing woody growths such as cherkez (*Salsola arbuscula*) and kandyk (*Erythronium dens-canis*) will be carried out on a 1,500-hectare area. Airplanes are to sow saxaul on a 2,000-hectare area. At present, the first shelter belt in Khorezm is being prepared; it will cover a 40-kilometer area.

In order to afforest and utilize the desert of Central Asia, a Kara-Kum Scientific Research Station for studying deserts and sand is being built in Urgench. (5)

In the RSFSR, a forest-conservation expedition has returned from the western Volga steppe, where it studied the problem of stabilizing the shifting sands of the Caspian littoral. The expedition sowed sand oats between the sandy hillocks on a 2,100-hectare area. The sowing was done in 10-meter strips.

The problem of stabilizing shifting sands plays a large role in the plan for the transformation of nature in the western Volga steppes. At present, an expedition is studying, and will draw up, a plan for the area which will include a 200-kilometer sand stabilizing-belt. Tree planting is to begin in the spring. (6)

SOURCES

1. Cina, No 271, 18 Nov 49
2. Krasnyy Flot, No 282, 30 Nov 49
3. Pravda, No 332, 28 Nov 49
4. Trud, No 278, 25 Nov 49
5. Moskovskiy Bol'shevik, No 285, 4 Dec 49
6. Pravda, No 325, 21 Nov 49

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- 2 -

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